

Board Retreat

February 21, 2014

Prepared for:



Foothill Transit

Facilitated by:

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2013 Review

What is Going Well or Right?

Strengths

1.

2.

3.

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10.



Foothill Transit

Assessment in Preparation of the Annual Retreat

During the month of January 2014, Peter Stark, from Peter Barron Stark Companies, interviewed a total of 17 people who are currently Board or staff members at Foothill Transit. Some individuals were interviewed in person and others by phone. The average length of service with Foothill Transit for Board members was 11 years with a range of 5.5 years to 21 years. The average length of service with Foothill Transit for staff members was 8.1 years with a range of one month to 15 years.

The consultant asked questions designed to gain a better understanding of the current organizational issues at Foothill Transit. Feedback gained was used to customize the agenda and prepare for the upcoming retreat.

Interviews lasted an average of 20 minutes. What follows is a summary of responses to the questions asked during the interviews. In general, the following open-ended questions were asked:

- ❖ What do you feel are the strengths of the current Foothill Transit Board, staff or organization?
- ❖ What are the areas of concern or issues at Foothill Transit – areas that, if addressed at the retreat, would make the organization even stronger?
- ❖ On a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, how would you rate the level of service provided to customers/passengers by Foothill Transit?
- ❖ On a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, how would you rate teamwork between Board members?
- ❖ On a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, how would you rate communication between Board members?
- ❖ On a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, how would you rate teamwork between senior staff team members?
- ❖ On a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, how would you rate teamwork between Board members and staff?
- ❖ On a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, how would you rate communication between Board members and staff?

5. For you to view this year's retreat as a success, what would you like to see discussed or accomplished?

Strengths

Staffing (12)

- Team is strong and working well as a team (6)
- Right technical experience and motivated to do a great job (3)
- We have the right people in the right positions
- New staff have been great addition
- Re-energized and we are fully staffed

Change Business Model (11)

- Has had a positive impact on the team and morale (3)
- Helped us to build an even stronger team (2)
- Working well with Veolia doing transit stores
- Smooth, successful transition
- Moved quickly; successful
- Seemed like it was an insurmountable task and we did it in six weeks
- Created new opportunities for employees
- Mission is clearer

Cohesive Board (4)

- Work well together and work well with Foothill's staff

Projects (4)

- We have taken on a large number of projects and successfully completed them; Park and Rides; New buses

Service is Improving (3)

- Contractor is focused on improving the service
- KPI's improved in schedule adherence
- We are using the Smart Bus data better in making decisions

College Pass (3)

- Positive response with regard to colleges – well received; encouraged and supported by Board members (2)
- 5,000 students are riding the bus

Communication with Staff (2)

- Communication with staff has really improved: 7:30 daily meetings have improved communication

Mentioned One Time

- Bus delivery
- Image of buses is positive
- Technology: great reputation for being on the cutting edge
- Finances are really strong
- Dealing with change: willing to look for new opportunities
- Customer service: we are really focused on making our customers really happy
- Great job following public entity procedures
- Source of funding is strong
- CEO & Kevin: strong commitment; really supportive of staff growth and development

Opportunities for Improvement

When participants were asked, "What are the areas that Foothill Transit could improve?" and/or "What are the topics you feel need to be discussed at the retreat?" the following comments were shared:

First Transit: Improve Service Performance (13)

- Improve on time performance (3)
- Minimize missed trips (2)
- Improve bus dependability (2)
- Improve Arcadia facility (2)
- Clearer communication with the yards to ensure we share a vision of excellence (2)
- Provide customer service training to drivers (2)

Formalize Policies and Procedures (7)

- Even more development of manuals and standard operating procedures (6)
- An ISO 9000 program or type of program would help us

Increase Ridership (2)

- Maybe even add some routes in the system

Mentioned One Time

- New Smart Bus System – planned for next fiscal year
- We have so much funding. Is there a way to expand, like we did with the colleges, to provide an even higher level of service?
- Set achievable goals
- Even more communication between departments; we have new staff; need to make sure everyone is in the loop
- Need to ensure that our new goals are in alignment with what is Foothill's original mission

Customer Service

When Board or staff were asked to rate the level of service provided to customers on a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, the average was **7.6** with a range of 6 to 8.5.

Teamwork between Board Members

When asked to rate the level of teamwork between Board members on a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, the average was **9.0** with a range of 8 to 10.

Communication between Board Members

When asked to rate the level of communication between Board members on a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, the average was **8.7** with a range of 6 to 10.

Teamwork between Senior Staff Members

When asked to rate the level of teamwork between senior staff members on a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, the average was **8.7** with a range of 6 to 10.

Cross-Departmental Communication between Staff

When asked to rate the level of cross-departmental communication between staff on a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, the average was **8.4** with a range of 6 to 10.

Teamwork between Board and Staff (Doran & Staff)

When asked to rate the level of teamwork between the Board and staff on a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, the average was **9.0** with a range of 6 to 10.

Communication between Board and Staff

When asked to rate the level of communication between the Board and staff on a scale of one-to-ten, with one low and ten high, the average was **9.4** with a range of 8 to 10.

Goals for the Retreat

The following topics were mentioned as either goals for the retreat or topics people want to discuss:

Contractor Performance (12)

- Develop a plan to tighten operations: on time performance; improve customer service; cleaner buses; better maintenance (6)
- Training for drivers to deliver even better levels of service (3)
- Improve the dependability of the service
- Solution for Arcadia – bigger improvements each month; in December we adjusted the schedule to deal with long-term construction or dealing with traffic patterns – did this help?
- Operator uniforms

Funding and Finances (10)

- What are we going to do with our money? What is our plan to protect and strengthen? (3)
- College pass: Where will the funding come from? Do we want to expand it to Citrus College? (3)
- Discussion of investment policy and finance status (2)
- Board stipends (2)

Meeting Format (5)

- Advance preparation – Board and staff being on the same page (3)
- Specific discussion items with time parameters
- Clear communication – start time and end time – get schedules coordinated in advance

Smart Bus Technology Replacement (4)

- System needs to be replaced (2)
- Goals: the KPI's need to be better matched with the data we are collecting (2)

Electric Bus Project (2)

- Getting direction from the Board on where do we move forward with the electric bus program – should we move forward; wait and see; look at other alternative products
- Primarily on route 291; would like to see a route in Claremont electrified

Customer Service (2)

- Productivity versus convenience – do we put service out there but is not productive or stay in alignment with the KPI's

Mentioned One Time:

- Use an express line from Claremont or Montclair to Ontario Airport – is that possible?
- Business Model: analysis of where we are in the transition: what is going well and right; opportunities to complete or improve
- Governing Board Election Process
- Team Building: Understand the process and get to know the Board even better

Seminar Evaluation

Board Retreat

1. How will the information you gathered in this retreat help you in the future?

2. What aspect of this retreat did you find most beneficial?

3. Circle your rating of the retreat:

Low
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 High
10

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